

REMARKS

I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner stated that the terms “the pusher” and “the inlet port” in claim 4 and “the outlet port” in claims 6 and 7 lack antecedent basis. With respect to claim 4, claim 1 has been amended such that the terms “the pusher” and “the inlet port” due have antecedent basis in claim 4. Claim 6 has been cancelled. Further, amendments to claim 1 introduce “an outlet” such that the term “the outlet” in claim 7 has antecedent basis.

The Examiner stated that antecedent for “the valve body” in claims 6 and 7 is unclear since independent claim 1 also includes a valve body. Claim 6 has been cancelled. Claim 7 has been amended to recite the “valve body of the third connector port.” This finds support in the specification on page 6, lines 8-9.

With respect to the unclear claim language of claim 6, claim 6 has been cancelled. As such this rejection is now moot.

With respect to naming a “third” connector port in claim 7, Applicant respectfully proffers that the amendment to claim 1 to include a second connector port renders this rejection for claim 7 moot.

Applicant respectfully contends that amendments made herein address the rejections articulated in the office action. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 4, and 8-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,327,858 to Eddy et al. (“Eddy”). Further, claims 1-3, 6, 7 and 9 were deemed anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,695,168 to Williams.

In light of the amendments made herein, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. In order for a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) to be proper, all claim limitations must be taught

by a single reference. Applicant notes that the Examiner did not reject original claim 5 as being anticipated by Eddy or Williams. Original claim 5 is now cancelled and the limitation recited therein has been added in claim 1. More specifically, claim 1 now recites, "said connector being swingable about a pivot axis between a filter service position and filter replacement position." Claim 1 has also been amended to recite "a plurality of water flow grooves provided on the inner circumference of the valve chamber of the first connector port and the second connector port of the connector." Because none of the references teach or suggest these limitations, Applicant respectfully contends that amended claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 2-9 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, which is now deemed allowable. The arguments for claim 1 are equally applicable here and are incorporated herein by reference. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,397,462 to Higashijima et al. ("Higashijima") in view of Williams. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Amended claim 1 now requires, "a plurality of water flow grooves provided on the inner circumference of the valve chamber of the first connector port and the second connector port of the connector." None of the cited references alone or in combination teach or suggest this limitation.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite to comprise a first connector port and a second connector port. The present invention is directed to a water shut-off device that can effectively block the flow of water at the time of changing the filter. In this connection, the present invention comprises a connector having a first connector port and a second connector port. This structure makes it possible to keep remaining water in the water inlet passageway 12 and the water discharge passageway 18 from leaking when the filter is detached. Furthermore, none of the patents cited disclosed the use of these technical features of the present invention regarding a valve chamber 14a. In the present invention, a plurality of water flow grooves 14d is provided on the inner circumference of the valve chamber 14a at regular intervals. It is based upon this unique construction that the present invention is superior to the references cited. None of the

references cited teach or suggest the combination of the first connector port, second connector port and the plurality of water flow grooves provided at the inner circumference of the valve chamber to help control water flow. Based upon the foregoing, Applicant respectfully contends that the present invention is novel and not obvious.

CONCLUSION

In response to the Office Action dated October 17, 2007, claims 2, 5, 6, and 9 were cancelled. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 8 have been amended pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.121. It is believed these amendments have placed the amended claims in conformance with the requirements of the Office Action. At this point, applicant believes that the claims remaining in the case distinguish over the art cited and comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102, §103, and §112. As such, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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